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CASE OF SOMNAMBULISM.

*To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

SIR,—If you think the annexed history of a case of somnambulism is worth publication in your Journal, it is at your disposal. It took place in the years 1834—5, at Gloucester, in this State, and was witnessed by numbers of intelligent men, who can substantiate every material fact here stated. Among others might be mentioned the names of Dr. Joseph Reynolds, of Gloucester, a gentleman well known to the medical profession throughout Essex County, and Jabez R. Gott, Esq., who is also extensively known as Agent for the American Isinglass Company, and who was present at the bedside of the patient, and took notes of his conversation in more than one instance. During the first, and most interesting period of the disease, the young man was under the care of Dr. Reynolds, with whom I was a student at the time, and who recently stated the outlines of the case before the Essex District Medical Society. For a short period during its decline, he was an inmate of the Mass. General Hospital, where, if I have been rightly informed, his case now stands on the register as a modification of epilepsy.

*South Boston, June, 1837.*

BENJAMIN HASKELL, M.D.

The subject of the following statement, Mr. Wm. Blatchford, Jr., is a native of Gloucester, where he now resides. He is about 20 years of age, and is in the full possession of his mental faculties. His bodily health had been good, from a child up to the period of his attack. The season previous he was employed on board a freighting vessel which runs between this port and New York, and had been at home but about three weeks when the first symptoms manifested themselves. On the evening of January 2d, 1834, he complained of a severe pain in the head, and retired to rest rather sooner than usual. The next evening he complained of a similar pain, but more severe. This took place half an hour earlier than on the preceding evening, and was attended with confusion of ideas, and various marks of mental disturbance. On the third evening, still earlier, began what seemed to be a regular paroxysm of intermittent fever, passing successively through the cold, the hot, and the sweating stages. The disease continued in this form about three weeks. His physician, Dr. R., judging from present appearances, and from the possibility of his exposure to malaria while at New York, inferred that it must be nothing more nor less than *intermittent fever*;

and, in consequence, the usual treatment for that disease was adopted, but with indifferent success. The paroxysms continued anticipating their periodical times, until they began to come on at one o'clock in the afternoon, when the disease suddenly changed its type. The patient was attacked, at uncertain periods in the day, with a series of fits, which varied much in number and duration, as well as in character. Some of them resembled epilepsy, others ecstasy or trance, during which he would lie from half an hour to an hour without sense or motion. In others, one set of muscles alone would seem to be affected. When this was the case with the respiratory, it was distressing to witness the convulsive paroxysms that followed, and which seemed to arise from a want of consent between the action of the muscles that serve to dilate the chest, and those which regulate the admission of air into the lungs. Strong efforts were made by the diaphragm and thoracic muscles to effect inspiration, while the glottis remained closed. During these efforts the patient was completely insensible. The convulsive catchings and throttlings, alternating with complete suspension of the passage of air through the trachea, so long as in many instances to lead those around to believe him dead, were succeeded by a continued, deep, agonizing groan, which lasted during the whole of expiration, and constituted it.

Sometimes he would display great agility and command over the system of voluntary muscles, performing the feats of a rope-dancer with singular dexterity and address, placing himself in a variety of grotesque attitudes, leaping on the necks of persons at a distance, on the mantelpiece, and walking its length, and balancing himself with one foot on the back of a chair.

That variety of somnambulism, from which it takes its name, was noticed in connection with these paroxysms a number of times. But its duration was usually so short that it attracted but little attention, compared with other symptoms. He was occasionally observed to go through a variety of movements about the house, while apparently asleep, such as blowing the fire with the bellows, sweeping the hearth, and arranging the chairs in order.

When these paroxysms were frequent and severe, he would appear somewhat irritable, morose and dull of apprehension in the intervals. His memory was affected by them. Often, when food or medicine was offered, and urged upon him, he would object to taking it with warmth, and in a few hours affirm that nothing of the kind had been presented to him.

On the subsidence of the above paroxysms, particularly those of the convulsive kind, it was ascertained that he possessed great acuteness of several of the senses. This became apparent in regard to the senses of touch and hearing, from the fact that slight impressions on the skin were painful, and faint sounds unpleasantly loud.

But it was in the organ of vision that this effect was most strikingly manifested, and gave rise to numerous conjectures and hypotheses in the imaginations of the learned and unlearned to account for it; the former speculating until they entered the mysticisms of animal magnetism, the latter stopping short at the gate of her homespun sister, witchcraft. It

was not until the middle of February that the discovery was made of the great sensibility of the eye to light, though in all probability it existed a month before. It happened accidentally. The light having been removed from the room, just as he was coming out of one of these paroxysms, his mother, who remained with him, in crossing the floor came in contact with a chair. On his inquiring why she did so, she replied, "because it is so dark that I cannot see." He seemed surprised, and in rejoining, observed that he could see to read the lettering on the back of the bible which was then lying on a table at the opposite side of the room. His father then came in with the light. He complained that it dazzled his eyes. A handkerchief, folded a number of times, was then applied over his eyes, and a copy of Watts's psalms and hymns was presented to him, out of which he read several stanzas. This experiment was often repeated during his illness; it was witnessed by myself, as well as by a number who were incredulous at first, but who were soon convinced, when they saw the patient, that deception was impossible. Other phenomena occurred, exhibiting acuteness of vision to a remarkable degree. The house in which he lived overlooked a large bay, the entrance into the harbor. Frequently during the day, as soon as he had come to himself after a fit, he would look out of the window and distinguish vessels coming into the harbor, and what they carried on deck, describing minute particulars, when the hull was scarcely discernible in the distance to the bystanders. On one occasion, I was present to witness him in one of those paroxysms of the respiratory system, which have been spoken of as peculiarly violent and distressing. It was between twilight and dark, and there was no light in the room (the patient's state at such times not allowing one), when two persons came in, whom I did not recognize, from the place where I sat. Immediately on the subsidence of the paroxysm, two closely folded silk handkerchiefs were placed over his eyes by the hand of his father, and held in such a manner that he seemed to look through the hand as well as the handkerchiefs. He was then requested to name the individuals in the room, to the number of ten or twelve, his father pointing at each successively. The young man did so, calling by name those who entered while he was insensible, as well as the others. At another time he read fine print through ten thicknesses of diaper, held by a lady who was unwilling to believe the evidence of her senses. Letters at this time, as he expressed to Mr. Gott, appeared to him as large as the ends of one's fingers, and men were magnified into giants.

This exaltation of vision continued after it was discovered, more than a month, and disappeared as the fits assumed more and more of an epileptic character. It invariably came on at the close of one of those irregular convulsive paroxysms, and usually lasted but a few minutes. Whether it depended on an increased sensibility of the retina, or an increased activity of the power of perception within the brain, or on a principle of sympathy, by which the sensorial organs and the other nerves, respectively, assume a certain state, in consequence of an impression being made on one of them, alone, which had formerly affected both simultaneously and thrown them into the same state, or, finally, as

the majority of animal magnetizers assert, in the elevation of the ganglionic nerves to the office of the sensorial, are questions belonging to the metaphysics of physiology.

Sleep-talking manifested itself as soon as the above-mentioned affection of the sense of vision. It continued, however, some time after the latter ceased. About the period of its commencement it was usual for him to have from three to five convulsive fits between 4 and 6, P. M., after which he would express a desire to retire to rest. When the bed was prepared for him in an adjacent room, he arose from his chair, went in, and undressed himself. He would then leap from the floor on to the bed, and the instant his foot touched it, he would fall on his back, as senseless and motionless as a corpse. From that moment, until he awoke the next morning, of his own accord, nothing would rouse him. Every method that was tried to elicit signs of sensation, as pricking with a needle, pinching biles, of which he had several, and irritating blistered surfaces, proved unavailing. He commonly reclined on his back, his eyes half closed, the cornea hid beneath the upper lid, respiration scarcely perceptible, pulse slow and feeble. After remaining in this state an uncertain period, varying from a few minutes to half an hour, he would begin to give signs of uneasiness, by sighing, turning from side to side, opening his eyes and rolling them from without inwards, and from within outwards, though with so much velocity that the state of the pupils could not be ascertained. These movements were followed by a slight convulsive motion of the jaws, with grinding of the teeth. The whole never occupied more than five minutes, was universally the prelude to talking, and was again renewed in the intermissions of his discourse; the phenomena occurring in the exact order in which they have been mentioned, constituting, as it were, a title-page to the book of his story. As soon as they ceased, he commenced. His subject was generally, and always at the first, connected with the seas. He imagined himself to be the captain, and owner in part or in whole, of a merchant vessel, which he would take charge of while lying at the wharf unladen, and would commence with purchasing a cargo, or engaging a freight. Then followed the process of loading, during which he would describe the articles as they were hauled down to the landing place, and give minute directions in relation to the order in which they were to be taken on board, and in what part of the ship they were to be placed. He then got the ship ready for sea, cleared at the custom house, removed her from the wharf, and anchored her off in the stream. Next came the arduous task of hunting up the crew among the grog-shops and boarding-houses, getting them on board, and keeping them there, until he gave orders to weigh anchor and set sail. He gave his directions with precision and coolness, weighing the anchor, and setting one sail after another in the best and most expeditious manner; trimming his sails with reference to the direction of the wind and his own course, making frequent observations on the weather, or the vessels, islands, points, ledges, and shoals, he was liable to fall in with, going out of the harbor, evincing a degree of nautical skill and an acquaintance with maritime affairs altogether foreign from him when awake. His

voyages exhibited the incidents usual to a seafaring life. His pilot was regularly discharged at the mouth of the harbor, and as regularly came on board at the return of the ship. He caused the anchor to be unbent and secured, and the cable to be stowed away, shaped his course, took his departure, and kept a reckoning of the ship's way, throwing the log periodically, and taking the altitude of the sun to ascertain the latitude.

When the weather was calm, he would frequently amuse himself with recounting the adventures of his former voyages. In these narrations he adhered strictly to truth; giving generally an account of the voyage immediately preceding the one in which he was then engaged, every circumstance of which he would remember with accuracy and detail with fidelity, though an interval had passed of twenty-four hours, and in the mean time, when awake and sensible, on being questioned, he was found to know nothing of it. To give an instance. Having cast away a ship on a small island near Cape Ann, the night following he gave the particulars just as they happened, describing the manner in which the ship struck the rocks, who was on deck with him, the number that escaped, how they succeeded in reaching the shore, and how they managed, by turning over the long boat, to shelter themselves from the weather.

When a storm was approaching, he made every disposition that a skilful commander could do to meet it, furling the small sails one by one, and reefing the large ones as the gale increased, sending down the topmast spars, and exhibiting, in his remarks on the violence and probable duration of the gale, the alternations of hope and fear, natural to one who felt that property and life were at stake.

Throughout the whole, whether at sea, or on shore, in fair weather or foul, no mistake in point of fact, no error in judgment, no inconsistency in conduct, could be detected by those who watched his conversation narrowly, and who were capable from experience and education to see them if they occurred. All were struck with the extent and accuracy of his knowledge, not only in relation to the management of a ship, but of geography, navigation, and the manners and customs of different nations, of which he knew comparatively nothing when awake. No less surprising was his acuteness of memory and judgment, and fertility in expedients.

To illustrate the state of his mental faculties, as well as of his moral feelings, at these times, a few facts and anecdotes will be related before proceeding farther.

His cargoes were always adapted to the port to which he sailed, and his return cargoes consisted of such articles as are usually brought from such ports. He always knew what articles were on board, the order in which they were taken in, and directed them to be hoisted out in the opposite manner. Thus it was frequently noticed that goods which came on board first, when at one of the American ports, in India would be hoisted out last, and vice versa. Once, on examining the manifest just after leaving port, he told the mate that there was one article in the vessel that he had not registered. And although the captain did all the talking, the

bystanders inferred, from the tenor of the conversation, that the mate denied that the article was on board. The matter was suffered to rest until the arrival of the ship in port, and discharge of her cargo, when the identical article in dispute made its appearance; the captain, addressing himself to the mate, says, "did not I tell you that was on board? now where is your manifest?" Whatever damage was sustained, no matter how trifling, he was sure to think of it and have it repaired at the next port. He had many fierce encounters with pirates, but always came off victorious. So cool, precise, and minute, was he in his directions and manœuvres, and so closely did he scan the appearance and manœuvres of the hostile ship, that the whole scene was presented to our view as vividly as the sea fights depicted in the pages of the Pilot and Red Rover.

There was one exception to the remark made above, that his voyages were all adapted to the port to which he sailed, which, as it concerns the character of the capital of Essex County, I am induced to mention. The trip was out of his usual line, and he seemed to undertake it because he could not find a vessel suitable for him to purchase. He bought an old schooner, and came to Salem with a cargo of wooden squashes and pumpkins, where he succeeded in disposing of the whole to good advantage. But the truth being discovered before he set sail, he was obliged to abscond by land, leaving the Old Hulk in possession of the inhabitants to indemnify them for the imposition. When he had thus taken French leave, he congratulated himself as much for being rid of the vessel as the pumpkins.

In one of his voyages to China, he manifested the same propensity to appropriate to himself the funds of others, at the expense of one of the insurance companies of Boston. While at Canton he purchased a quantity of tea, and managed to get it insured at Boston as his own cargo. He took, however, but a small part of it on board his own ship, despatching the rest by another. As soon as he left port, he held a consultation with his mate relative to the best coast on which to run the ship ashore. Nantucket was the place designated. And in due time the ship went ashore at Nantucket. "Now, mate," says he, "what shall I tell the underwriters? I'll tell you what I'll tell them; I will say to them that the mate was a fool, and the men would not obey me." In this way he succeeded in obtaining insurance not only on his own ship and cargo, but also on the tea which arrived safe in another vessel.

Another incident, illustrating his fertility in expedients, together with an unexpected acquaintance with facts, took place when at Sumatra, procuring a cargo of pepper. Being obliged to be on shore during the greater part of the day, purchasing the pepper as it was brought in small quantities, he directed his dinner to be sent to him. The Malays, to whom it was entrusted, abstracted more or less of it, leaving him, in general, but a short allowance. When he found it out, he advised his cook, when he next sent it on shore by them, to tell them it was "Hog." This precaution had the desired effect; the Malays, truer to their religious creed than to the principles of common honesty, obeyed the injunction of the

prophet, "Good Musselnien, abstain from pork," and brought him his dinner untouched.

He was often questioned during the day respecting facts, a knowledge of which he exhibited the night before, but was found to be totally ignorant of them. In a voyage to Liverpool he was embarrassed by a bar or bank at the mouth of the river Mersey ; but on being asked the question next day, knew not that such an obstruction to the navigation existed.

If a shade rests on the moral character of his somnambulism, in regard to confounding the distinctions between meum and tuum, it should be mentioned, by way of palliation, that he was a thorough temperance man, and never allowed a drop of ardent spirits on board his ship. He was also very careful of his crew, not exposing them to danger unnecessarily, and frequently cautioning them, when aloft, to hold on, and not to venture too far.

His conduct was consistent in itself and true to the character which he imagined himself to be acting. He never purchased a vessel, or sailed in one, without disposing of her previous to taking charge of another. Sometimes he would cast her away, to defraud the underwriters, sometimes he would be shipwrecked accidentally ; but if he escaped the dangers of the sea, he sold the vessel after performing a greater or less number of voyages in her, and then purchased another. The shorter voyages were generally performed in one night, the longer commonly occupied two. He seldom broke off conversation for the night abruptly. It seemed to terminate at that point, arrived at which, one would naturally suppose he would stop. On shore it was not until he had sold and discharged his cargo, and might be supposed to have leisure to rest. At sea, it was common for him to lay the ship to, in a gale of wind, under a close-reefed maintopsail, and say to those on deck, "now I believe I will go below and turn in," after which he was heard no more for the night. When he commenced talking on the next evening, he was sure to find the ship, whether at sea or in port, in the exact condition in which he left her. If, for instance, he left her lying to, he would find her still in the same situation, under the same sail, and in the same latitude and longitude. If the gale had abated, he would order the reefs to be shaken out, and other sails to be set, in order to resume the voyage.

There were frequent intermissions in his discourse, during which the same slight convulsive agitation was noticed that preceded conversation. When he recommenced, he seemed to have passed over a great extent of surface, a circumstance which will account, probably, for his accomplishing so much in so short a space of time. Perhaps at the commencement of one of these intervals, the ship was midway in the Atlantic ocean, making her way towards the American coast ; at the close of it, she would be approaching soundings.

The state of his bodily feelings, insensible as he was to external impressions, appeared to influence the train of ideas passing through his mind. Towards the close of his somnambulism, his voyages grew shorter and were attended with more incidents of a painful nature. Hair-breadth

escapes, shipwrecks, accidents of various kinds, fierce encounters with pirates, were frequent occurrences. In several successive voyages his black cook turned white through terror. In one, in which he was shipwrecked, he alone effected his escape by swimming five or six miles. After several voyages to the East and West Indies, to South America, to the Mediterranean, to Liverpool, and France, sailing more in two months than most of our sea captains do in a long life, he closed his brief but eventful career with a short trip to Bermuda. On his home-ward passage, off Cape Cod, his vessel was strained to such an extent that with difficulty he succeeded in reaching the port of Boston. Having discharged his cargo there, and not being able to get her repaired on the marine railway as cheap as he wished, he concluded to take her to Salem for that purpose. Unfortunately she was stranded on the Pig rocks, so called, at the entrance of that harbor. Himself and crew took to the boats, and he came home to Gloucester, affirming that he was sick of the sea, and would never wet his jacket with salt water again. From that time he has not been known to talk in his sleep. The other symptoms continued without essential variation until Feb. 2d, 1835.

Sleep-talking took place always in the evening, beginning between 7 and 8, and ending at about 11 o'clock. During the remainder of the night, his sleep was profound, and undisturbed, except by two or three epileptic paroxysms, which he was wont to have towards morning. His manner of waking was as peculiar as his going to sleep. *Many efforts were made by his friends, by secreting themselves in his room, at his usual time of waking, which was about the hour of breakfast, to observe his movements when he awoke. But they were unsuccessful. He seemed, as it were, conscious of their presence, and remained tranquil until they left the room. Scarcely had they passed through the door, when he would be heard rolling from the bed on the floor\**. He would then rise and dress, go down, and seat himself at the breakfast table as though nothing had happened. He was totally ignorant of what had taken place in the night, and at first could scarcely be made to believe it. Through the day, he appeared rather dull and dejected, complained at times of pain in the head, was emaciated, and presented the appearance of one laboring under chronic disease. There was great irritability of the stomach, and vomiting when he ate a full meal. Occasional haemorrhages took place from the mouth or stomach, were more frequent towards the close of the disease, and seemed to alleviate it. There was also a discharge of matter, highly offensive, from his mouth, the origin of which was not ascertained. This occurred at an early period. At the same time the urinary secretion was very defective.

Hitherto, the facts, as above stated, are analogous to those which have been published in other cases of somnambulism, and will not need any other confirmation. Hypotheses are also afloat, enough to explain them

\* Were it possible to ascertain beyond a doubt that the presence of persons in the room was the cause of his continued somnolence, at such times, no other fact would be needed to prove the essential principle of magnetization, viz. that an influence is radiated from one person to another in some mysterious manner, having a tendency to develop the phenomena of somnambulism. But I do not consider the evidence, though strong, sufficiently conclusive to warrant such an inference, and am unable to give data to enable others to estimate with accuracy its probability.

satisfactorily, without any speculations of mine. My object is, to present the phenomena as they occurred, which will be found, if I mistake not, as interesting, in number and variety, as any yet offered to the contemplation of the mental or medical philosopher.

Without stopping to inquire how far the disease had its origin in those causes which give rise to intermittent fever, the tendency to periodicity in all affections of the nervous system is too well known to need their agency in explaining the phenomena. The convulsive paroxysms, though in some instances anomalous and peculiar, need not detain us. The remaining facts can be accounted for on the supposition of increased sensorial power, or nervous energy, which was exhibited in the muscular system by the great command he had at times over the voluntary muscles; in the organs of the senses, by the increased sensibility to touch, sound, and, most conspicuously, to light, proved alike by his being dazzled by faintly illuminated objects, and seeing best through nearly opaque media; and, lastly, in his intellectual faculties, all of which seemed so active as to recall and render available to his present purpose, any idea, perception, or impression, that had at any former period been felt by his brain, bearing a relation to the train of ideas passing through his mind at the time, while his judgment, wit and capacity, were equally striking.

Lest it might appear incomprehensible to some how he could manifest so much acquaintance with maritime affairs, when he had scarcely been on board a ship, even in port, it should be mentioned that he had been in a coasting vessel, had listened to the narrations of seamen who had been on foreign voyages, and had in consequence heard much, which he could not recollect when awake, but which readily recurred to him when it bore relation to the train of ideas occupying his mind in the state of somnambulism. Indeed, several instances of this kind were traced. Among others might be mentioned his knowledge of the bar, below the harbor of Liverpool, as probably derived from hearing his father, who had been to Liverpool when young, speak of it. About the commencement of this affection he had frequent pugilistic encounters with a large Spanish negro, whom he described so exactly, that the captain of the vessel, on board of which he had been the season previous, recognized him as one of the crew of a brig, near which he lay at New York, and whom he had seen engaged at fisticuffs with an Irishman.

There is yet another fact, which was omitted to be stated in its proper connection, from an apprehension that it might have a tendency to throw discredit on the rest. I am induced to annex it here, from the consideration of the bearing it has on a science which has made no small stir in Europe, and a branch of which has lately emigrated to this country. Besides, no person has, in strict justice to the interests of science, a right, when he professes to give a history of a case of disease, to state those facts only which appear to him plausible, passing over others, resting on the same authority, especially when they are closely allied to facts already published and waiting confirmation. In the late work of Prichard on Insanity, where he treats of animal magnetism, towards the close, a number of cases are related, in which similar phenomena to that alluded to were witnessed.

The circumstance took place in the afternoon, in the presence of the young man's father and the captain of the vessel on board of which he had been employed the season previous. He had been lying on the floor, on his back, for more than half an hour, in a convulsive fit. On his return to consciousness, he observed that two vessels, one a hermaphrodite brig, the other a topsail schooner, were passing by a ledge of rocks in the vicinity, but so situated that a long range of buildings intervened between him and the objects designated. The persons present were incredulous at first; but on being persuaded to look out of the window opposite to the nearest visible point to the ledge, saw, after a reasonable time (occupied in passing by the intervening houses), the two vessels under the same sail, and in the same relative position to each other, which he had described, the brig being to windward.

In the minds of most persons, the easiest way of accounting for such an incident would be to disbelieve it altogether, and perhaps to consider the whole story but a second edition of that of the Cape Ann sea serpent. But those acquainted with the facts attending, and with the character of the individuals on whose authority the statement is made, will seek a different explanation. A careful examination of the room which he was in, as well as the position in which he was lying at the time, has led me to infer that the images of the vessels were reflected from a cloud visible to him through an opposite window, on which they were portrayed too feebly to be perceptible to ordinary vision, but distinct to an eye possessed of such intense sensibility to light as his evidenced at those periods. If this explanation is not adopted, we may suppose either that a long row of buildings is not perfectly opaque, or that light does not travel in straight lines, or, finally, refer it, along with other *unfinished business*, to animal magnetism.

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#### INCISION OF THE ABDOMEN SUCCESSFULLY TREATED.

BY H. TUCK, M.D., BARNSTABLE, MASS.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

ON Wednesday, August 25th, 1836, a healthy boy, six years of age, received a wound in his abdomen from a scythe with which another boy was mowing. The point of the instrument entered the abdomen upon the left side, a little below, and three inches from, the umbilicus, and passed in four inches, as indicated by the blood upon the scythe, making a wound two inches in length, through which a greater part of his intestines passed. The accident occurred at six, P. M., and two hours afterwards I found him lying on a bed covered with blood, rolling from one side to the other, and his intestines trailing after him. The countenance pallid; vomiting occasionally; surface cold; pulse frequent, and scarcely perceptible at the wrist. The patient being laid on a table, and coagula of blood being removed from folds of the intestines, and pressed out of the cavity of the abdomen through the wound, an attempt was made to return the bowels into the abdominal cavity. But on account of the large volume of flatus and fæces which were in the intestines,

they could not be replaced without dilating the wound, which was done in an outward direction with a director and probe-pointed bistoury. The wound now being about two and a half inches in length, the bowels were readily returned. The patient was now senseless: no pulse at the wrist; body cold, and covered with perspiration; countenance livid, and the respirations slow—apparently dying.

Warm water and spirit, in the absence of all other stimulants, was given him to drink freely. Bottles of hot water were applied to the trunk and extremities. He soon revived, and the pulse and warmth of body returned. He could now speak, and drank a little gruel. After waiting an hour, the edges of the wound were brought in apposition and kept so by two interrupted sutures, which included the integuments and muscles, and adhesive straps. Scrapped lint and several compresses were applied over the straps, and a wide roller passed around the body, which was kept in its place by two straps passed over the shoulders and two others between the legs. After the wound was dressed he was inclined to go to sleep. Being troubled occasionally with attempts to vomit, he was ordered a powder containing a third of a grain of opium and five grains of soda, and sinapisms to epigastrium, to be repeated and continued as long as they could be tolerated, together with balm tea for drink.

Thursday, 26th. Slept quietly most of night; vomited occasionally—now reposing and looking comfortable; little or no febrile action; asks for food. He was ordered an enema of molasses and water night and morning, flour gruel and balm tea.

Friday, 27th. Copious dejections after enemata of yesterday; rested well through day and night; no febrile action nor pain; calls for solid food urgently. Dressings were removed from the wound; the edges united by adhesion; stitches allowed to remain another day.

Saturday, 28th. Looks and reports quite well; calls for solid food irresistible; may have a little tea and cracker. The stitches were now removed, and the edges of the wound sound completely and firmly united, and the abdomen natural in appearance. Injections of senna tea, sulphate magnesia and castor oil are now given twice a day, which produce sufficient alvine evacuations. Adhesive straps, compresses and bandage are still continued.

After this time convalescence continued till he was quite well. On the fifth, sixth, and seventh days after the occurrence of the accident, he was sitting up and walking about his room, and on the eighth day he walked abroad in the open air. In a few days he joined in the sports of the other children, and was quite well.

About eight months after the accident the patient was seen again, when a little tumefaction was noticed under the cicatrix of the wound, which was slightly increased by coughing. The parietes of the abdomen seemed to be thinner and rather more yielding here than in any other place. The mother reports that the swelling lessens from one month to another, and is not increased so much as formerly, when he coughs or cries. Compresses and bandages had not been omitted. They were recommended to be continued a year or more.

May 27, 1837.

## MEDICAL BOTANY.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

NO. VII.—TRILLIUM. AMERICAN HERB PARIS.

**SEX. SYST.**—Class hexandria; order trigynia. *Generic Characteristics.*—*Calyx* three leaved; *corolla* three petalled; *stigmas* sessile; *pericarp* a berry, three celled, many seeded.

Seven species of the Trillium are found in the eastern and middle States.

*Specif. Descrip.*—*Trillium Erectum.* Peduncle nearly erect, three inches long; flower nodding; petals ovate, acuminate, flat, spreading, more than equalling the calyx; leaves three, verticillate, broad-rhomboidal, acuminate, sessile. This is a fine-looking vernal flower, growing luxuriant, in a rich soil, in shady and rocky places. Root perennial; stem solitary, a foot high; flowers in May. There are two varieties: *atropurpureum*, flowers large, dark purple; and *album*, flowers smaller, white.

The various species and varieties of Trillium are known in the country by the names, *fox-blow*, *beth*, *bath* and *birth root*, *Benjamin root*, &c. They have long been known in domestic practice, and are probably deserving of some attention by medical men.

The root is the part used. It is of a pungent, acrimonious taste, and is esteemed a valuable remedy in haemorrhage unattended with pyrexia. It is said to be "one of the mildest, yet most efficient remedies for haemoptysis." It is an article of considerable power, and, in the hands of physicians, would, doubtless, often prove a valuable remedial agent. It is probably astringent, tonic, antiseptic, and perhaps, in certain cases, alterative. I have known it used in epistaxis and haemoptysis with good success. Some recommend it in form of poultice, as an antiseptic, for inflamed ulcers and carbuncles. Probably, too, it would be a valuable remedy in chancre. It is at least worth transferring to hedges as an ornament, and merits a trial in disease by physicians. The species above described, variety *album*, is esteemed by some as the most efficient, but the Shakers preserve the variety *atropurpureum*. Dose of the root in powder, grs. x. to xxx.

S. A. T.

Cambridge, May 24, 1837.

*Erratum.*—In Medical Botany No. 6, line 5, for *Chelone Glabera*, read *Chelone Glabra*.

## BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, JUNE 14, 1837.

## MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY.

THE late anniversary meeting of this association, though not as numerously attended as in some former years, was nevertheless extremely interesting to the members. George Hayward, M.D., Prof. of the Prin-

ciples of Surgery in Harvard University, read a discourse on diseases of the knee-joint. Unfortunately, for ourselves particularly, we heard only the closing remarks, and, therefore, not having a reporter present, could give but a beggarly account of the performance, were we to attempt it. We can assure our readers, however, from the testimony of very many, that Dr. Hayward answered the expectations of the Society. The dinner was served at Faneuil Hall, as usual. The following gentlemen were elected officers for the ensuing year, viz. :

George C. Shattuck, M.D., *President*—Nathaniel Miller, M.D., *Vice President*—Enoch Hale, M.D., *Corresponding Secretary*—John Homans, M.D., *Recording Secretary*—Walter Channing, M.D., *Treasurer*—David Osgood, M.D., *Librarian*.

*COUNSELLORS.*—*First Department.*—See last week's Journal.

*Second Department.*—Joseph Kittredge, Jeremiah Spofford, Abel L. Peirson, Andrew Nichols, Edward L. Coffin, Samuel Johnson, Richard S. Spofford, Calvin Briggs, Dean Robinson, Jonathan C. Johnson, Edward A. Holyoke, Wyatt C. Boyden, Rufus Longley.

*Third Department.*—Thomas Bucklin, John Walton, Abraham R. Thompson, Timothy Wellington, Zadoc Howe, William J. Walker, John C. Dalton, Josiah Bartlett, Daniel Swan, John O. Green, Joshua Green, Elisha Bartlett, — Hooker.

*Fourth Department.*—Stephen Batchelder, John Green, Edward Flint, Benj. F. Heywood, Charles W. Wilder, Amos Parker, George Willard, John Starkweather, J. G. Metcalf.

*Fifth Department.*—Joseph H. Flint, Alpheus F. Stone, Stephen W. Williams, Eli Hall, Elisha Mather, Bela B. Jones, David Bemis.

*Sixth Department.*—Henry H. Childs, William H. Tyler, Asa G. Welch, Royal Fowler, Robert Worthington, Alfred Perry, Hubbard Bartlett.

*Seventh Department.*—Nathaniel Miller, John Bartlett, Samuel Bugbee, Robert Thaxter, Jeremy Stimson, Rufus Wyman, Ebenezer Alden, Noah Fyefield.

*Eighth Department.*—Hector Orr, Nathan Hayward, Ezekiel Thaxter, Paul L. Nichols, Noah Whitman, William Gordon.

*Ninth Department.*—Alexander Reed, William C. Whittredge, Andrew Mackie, Caleb Swan, Menzies R. Randall, William A. Gordon.

*Tenth Department.*—Joseph Sampson, Aaron Cornish, Paul Swift, Henry Tuck.

*CENSORS* for the *First Medical District*, and for the Society at large.—William J. Walker, Abel L. Peirson, John Ware, Edward Reynolds, Jr., Woodbridge Strong.

*Second Medical District.*—John Green, Benjamin F. Heywood, Charles W. Wilder, Benjamin Pond, William Workman.

*Third Medical District.*—Stephen W. Williams, Elisha Mather, Atherton Clark, Bela B. Jones, David Bemis.

*Fourth Medical District.*—Henry H. Childs, William H. Tyler, Alfred Perry, Asa G. Welch, Charles Worthington.

*Committee on Publications.*—Enoch Hale, John Ware, Solomon D. Townsend.

*Committee on Resignations.*—Walter Channing, Zabdiel B. Adams, John Jeffries.

Ebenezer Alden, of Randolph, was elected to deliver the next Annual Discourse.

JOHN HOMANS, Rec'g Sec'y.

## NEW JERSEY MEDICAL SOCIETY.

THE 71st Annual Meeting of the Medical Society of New Jersey was held at New Brunswick, May 9th, 1837.

The President, Dr. Van Derveer, called the Society to order, and read a dissertation on the subject of fever.

The Annual Report of the Standing Committee was presented, and also the form of a diploma for the honorary degree of M.D., which was accepted.

Besides the ordinary business of the Society, Dr. Taylor, chairman of the committee appointed at a previous meeting, presented a report relative to alterations of the By-Laws, which report was ordered to be filed and the further consideration of it postponed to the next annual meeting.

The following are the alterations proposed in the report, viz. :

1st. Instead of a separate Board of Censors for each of the Districts, as now constituted, three Censors are to be appointed from each District, who, when so appointed, shall constitute one Board, to meet semi-annually in April and October. The necessary expenses and two dollars per diem, to be accorded to each Censor.

2d. In order to secure the more punctual attendance of delegates at the stated and special meetings of the Society, it is proposed that no dividend of its funds be allowed to any District Society unless represented by at least three of its members.

3d. To increase the fee for the degree of M.D. to \$20.

4th. That the place of holding the semi-annual meeting be determined at each annual meeting, by a majority of the members present.

Dr. Samuel Hays was recommended by the standing committee for the honorary degree of M.D.

The following gentlemen were elected officers for the ensuing year.—Drs. Lyndon A. Smith (Newark), *President*; B. H. Stratton, 1st *Vice President*; J. G. Goble, 2d do.; Wm. P. Clarke, 3d do.; Samuel H. Pennington (Newark), *Cor. Sec'y*; Wm. Pierson, Jr. (Orange), *Rec. Sec'y*; Jer. S. English, *Treasurer*; Geo. M. McLean, Wm. Forman, Fred. S. Schenck, *Standing Committee*.

License to practise physic and surgery has been granted to the following gentlemen the past year. David D. Meeker, Dayton Decker, Lyman Mark Crane, Abram Coles, Ebenezer Woodruff, Wm. Shipman, Augustus O'Hea, John F. Ward, John N. Woodhull, Isaac S. Haines, George Barrow.

Society adjourned to hold its semi-annual meeting at Hollingshead, Trenton.

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*Sickness among Children.*—We understand that a disease, partaking of the character of influenza and lung fever, is very prevalent among children in Cambridge and other towns in the vicinity of Boston. On account of its peculiar symptoms, the name *grippe* has been given to it by some. Any further particulars from those who have witnessed cases of the disease, would be interesting to the profession.

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*University of Maryland.*—Dr. N. R. Smith, who has filled the chair of surgery many years, for some reason, which has not been explained, has withdrawn from the institution. It is announced, however, that Dr. Smith

will continue to reside in Baltimore, and practise surgery, as heretofore. Very few operators have been more successful than this gentleman, who, besides the highest order of professional attainments, possesses those qualities of the heart which are always appreciated. He is a son of the late Prof. Nathan Smith, of Dartmouth College, and in after life of Yale College Medical School, at New Haven.

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*The Southern Medical and Surgical Journal*, published in Augusta, Geo., and edited by Drs. Milton Antony and Joseph A. Eve, is hereafter to be conducted by the former gentleman alone. Dr. A. appeals to the members of the profession at the South for a more liberal patronage than has heretofore been given to the work, it not having been sufficient, during the past year, to pay the expenses of printing. If some of the contributors to that work (not in Augusta) neglect to pay their subscription for it with as little compunction as they have done that for the Boston Medical Journal, we can well understand the cause of Dr. Antony's complaint. We trust, however, there will be found paying subscribers enough among the liberal members of the profession in that part of our country, to insure the continuance of the Southern Journal, which is a very useful periodical.

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*Stuttering occasioned by worms.*—A boy, aged five years, who hitherto could distinctly pronounce even the most difficult words, and readily communicate his thoughts, all at once began to stutter. As no organic defect could be perceived, Dr. Schultze thought that the impediment might be occasioned by worms, as he had often noticed an entire loss of speech, lasting many days, to depend upon this cause. He therefore ordered an electuary composed of jalap. semin. cinæ, tanacet., and magnes. sulph. with syr. manna, to be given. By this medicine, a large quantity of the ascarides lumbricoides were voided, and the boy was again restored to the free use of his speech.—*Med. Zeitung*, 6 Jan. 1836.

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*Medical Miscellany.*—A lad by the name of Bartalo is exhibited at New York, on account of the size of his head, which measures 33 inches in circumference, yet he is but 39 inches tall. He is in good health, and the cranium well formed.—The skull of Le Blanc, the murderer of Judge Sayre and family, is a remarkable instrument in the hands of the phrenologists, for sustaining the science to which they are devoted.—A board of naval surgeons will assemble at Philadelphia the first Monday in July, for the examination of assistant surgeons. W. P. C. Barton is president of the Board.—The late Dr. Bushe, of New York, first came to this country to take the anatomical department of Rutgers Medical College, now converted into a hotel.—Eleven students were graduated on the first of May, by the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy. Daniel B. Smith, president of the institution, gave an address on the occasion.—Mr. Phelps, surgical instrument manufacturer, at the corner of Court street and Cornhill, deserves the encouragement of the profession.—Dr. Dunglison's *Intelligencer* is a valuable production. We hope, most sincerely, that the patronage is equal to his diligence.—A part of a back building connected with the main edifice of the Eye and Ear Infirmary, in this city, was materially injured by fire, a short time since—the probable work of an incendiary.—Late advices from the Mediterranean, make reference to the great destruction of human life by the plague, which still rages in many parts of Turkey.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—Will the author of an article on *Masturbation*, permit us to affix his name to it? This seems to be necessary, first, because the doctrine inculcated is so much at variance with the received notions of the profession on that subject; and, secondly, if the theory is really a correct one, the writer should be known, as very many will have a desire to open a correspondence with him.—The writer of a paper entitled “A dream,” will accept our thanks for his attentions, although we are compelled to say its publication is declined.—Dr. Tompkins’s case of Stone in the Bladder, and Dr. Goulding’s remarks, are added to the list of accepted communications.

DIED.—At Middletown, Ct., Dr. Stephen Rainey, aged 83, an officer of the revolutionary army.—At Pensacola, Dr. George Nicholas Rose, of Ambert Co., Va.

Whole number of deaths in Boston, for the week ending June 10, 25. Males, 16—Females, 9. Consumption, 2—infantile, 1—drophy in the head, 1—gastritis, 1—old age, 3—chronic diarrhoea, 1—disease of the heart, 1—phthisis pulmonalis, 2—lung fever, 1—dyspepsia, 1—erysipelas, 1—hydrocephalus, 1—typhus fever, 1—inflammation of the lungs, 1—apoplexy, 2—stillborn, 3.

#### NEW MEDICAL BOOKS.

WILLIAM D. TICKNOR, *Medical Bookseller*, corner of Washington and School streets, has just received, *Surgical Observations on Tumors*, with Cases and Operations; illustrated with many colored engravings. By John C. Warren, M.D. Price \$4.50.

A *Treatment on the Malformations, Injuries and Diseases of the Rectum and Anus*; illustrated with plates. By George Bushe, M.D. Price 50.00.

Also as above, may be found, a very complete assortment of Medical Books, which will be sold on the most reasonable terms.

June 14.

#### PROLAPSUS UTERI CURED BY EXTERNAL APPLICATION.

DR. A. G. HULL’S UTERO-ABDOMINAL SUPPORTER is offered to those afflicted with *Prolapsus Uteri*, and other diseases depending upon relaxation of the abdominal muscles, as an instrument in every way calculated for relief and permanent restoration to health. When this instrument is carefully and properly fitted to the form of the patient, it invariably affords the most immediate immunity, from the distressing “dragging and bearing down” sensations which accompany nearly all visceral displacements of the abdomen, and its skilful application is always followed by an early confession of radical relief from the patient herself. The Supporter is of simple construction, and can be applied by the patient without further aid. Within the last two years 700 of the Utero-Abdominal Supporters have been applied with the most happy results.

The very great success which this instrument has met, warrants the assertion, that its examination by the Physician will induce him to discard the disgusting pessary hitherto in use. It is gratifying to state, that it has met the decided approbation of every member of the Medical Faculty who has applied it, as well as every patient who has worn it.

The Subscribers having been appointed agents for the sale of the above instruments, all orders addressed to them will be promptly attended to. Price, \$10.

LOWE & REED, Boston; DAVID KIMBALL, Portsmouth, N. H.; JOSHUA DURGIN, Portland, Me.; JOSEPH BALCH, Jr., Providence, R. I.; ELISHA EDWARDS, Springfield, Mass.; N. S. WORDEN, Bridgeport, Conn.

May 10—6m

#### MEDICAL LECTURES.

THE Medical Lectures at Dartmouth College will commence on Thursday, the third day of next August, and continue fourteen weeks.

Anatomy, Surgery, and Obstetrics, by R. D. MUSSET, M.D.

Physiology, Mat. Med. and Legal Med., by D. OLIVER, M.D.

Theory and Practice of Physic, by J. DELAMATER, M.D.

Chemistry and Pharmacy, by O. P. HUBBARD, M.D.

Fee for the course, \$50. Matriculating fee, \$2.

J—73w

Hanover, N. H., May 26, 1837.

3m

#### THEODORE METCALF—APOTHECARY,

NO. 33 Tremont street, ten doors north of the Tremont House, devotes his chief attention to compounding prescriptions; and assures physicians that, in his establishment, no persons will be entrusted with this duty, except those of skill and experience, and no articles used but those of the best quality.

T. M. keeps no *quack medicines*, but chooses to rely for support upon regular practitioners and their patients. He is permitted to refer to Drs. Jackson and Reynolds.

May 24.

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL is published every Wednesday, by D. CLAPP, JR. at 184 Washington Street, corner of Franklin Street, to whom all communications must be addressed *postpaid*. It is also published in Monthly Parts, each Part containing the weekly numbers of the preceding month, stitched in a cover. J. V. C. SMITH, M.D. Editor.—Price \$3.00 a year in advance. \$3.50 after three months, and \$4.00 if not paid within the year.—Agents allowed every seventh copy gratis.—Orders from a distance must be accompanied by payment in advance, or satisfactory reference.—Postage the same as for a newspaper.